

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A system for making a three-material lollipop product, said system comprising:

an extruder for extruding a gum material;

a batch forming mechanism;

a tubular member for transporting the gum material into said batch forming mechanism;

a candy laminator mechanism for supplying candy material to said batch forming mechanism;

a semi-liquid-fill mechanism for adding a semi-liquid material to said gum material;

said batch forming mechanism forming a rope of three-layer material including a center layer of the semi-liquid material, an intermediate layer of the gum material, and an outer layer of the candy material;

a sizing mechanism for sizing the rope of three-layer material;

a lollipop forming mechanism for forming the rope of three-layer material into lollipop balls, said lollipop forming mechanism inserting stick members into each of the lollipop balls.

2. The system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a conveyer mechanism and a cooling mechanism, said conveyer mechanism positioned to transport the lollipop products into said cooling mechanism.

3. The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said candy laminator mechanism includes a candy conveyor member for transporting the candy material into the batch forming mechanism.

4. The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said batch forming mechanism has at least one end which is adjustable in a vertical direction.

5. The system as recited in claim 4 wherein said tubular member is adjustable to compensate for vertical movement of said one end of said bottom forming mechanism.

6. The system as recited in claim 5 wherein said tubular member comprises at least one swivel or pivoting mechanism.

7. The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said semi-liquid fill mechanism adds the liquid material to the gum material in said tubular member.

8. The system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a semi-liquid material conduit in said tubular member, said semi-liquid material being added to said gum material through said conduit.

9. The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said tubular member extends at least 50% into said batch forming mechanism.

10. The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said batch forming mechanism comprises a plurality of special roller members, and said tubular member is positioned in said batch forming mechanism substantially equi-distant from said roller members.

11. The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said sizing mechanism comprises a roller cluster and at least two pairs of flat roller members.

12. The system as recited in claim 2 wherein said cooling mechanism comprises a rotating tunnel member which tumbles the lollipop products therein and

wherein cooling air is supplied to said cooling mechanism in order to cool and harden the lollipop products.

13. The system as set forth in claim 2 wherein said cooling mechanism comprises a housing, a plurality of tray members in the housing, and means for shaking said tray members in order to tumble the lollipop products.

14. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein air is circulated through said housing in order to harden the lollipop products.

15. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said lollipop forming mechanism comprises a housing with a rotating drum member inside said drum member having a plurality of forming die members thereon.

16. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said lollipop forming mechanism comprises a housing with a pair of rotating chain members, said rotating chain members each having a plurality of forming dies thereon.

17. The system as set forth in claim 16 wherein said pair of rotating chain members includes a first chain member with a first plurality of partial die members thereon and a second chain member with a second plurality of partial die members thereon, said first and second plurality of partial die members meeting together forming completed forming dies for the lollipop products as the first and second chain members rotate.

18. A method of making a three-material lollipop product, said steps comprising:

extruding a gum material from an extruder;
transporting said extruded gum material into a batch forming mechanism;

injecting a center-fill semi-liquid material into said gum material;

coating said gum material with molten candy material in said batch forming mechanism; and

forming individual lollipop balls from said candy coated gum material in a lollipop forming mechanism.

19. The method as set forth in claim 18 further comprising the step of sizing said candy coated gum material in a sizing mechanism prior to forming individual lollipop balls in said lollipop forming mechanism.

20. The method as set forth in claim 18 further comprising the step of inserting sticks into said lollipop balls to form lollipop products.

21. The method as set forth in claim 20 further comprising the step of cooling said formed lollipop products.

22. A product having a center layer of a semi-liquid material, an intermediate layer of a gum material and an outer layer of a hard candy material.

23. The product as recited in claim 22 wherein said liquid material includes Pectin as one of its ingredients.

24. The product as recited in claim 22 wherein said lollipop product is made by a process

including the steps of extruding said gum material from an extruder, injecting said liquid material into said extruded gum material, coating said semi-liquid-filled gum material with a candy material, and forming said candy coated semi-liquid-filled gum material into a lollipop product.